Daughters of the American Revolution live up to their name by rejecting ban on trans women

“Transgender Americans are patriots, family members, volunteers, historians, and descendants of Revolutionary War ancestors just like anyone else.”

47th President General of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Ginnie Sebastian Storage and Anastacia McCleskey (R) are seen on Artwork Float during the 2026 National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade on April 11, 2026 in Washington, DC. / Brian Stukes/Getty Images

By Quispe López

Jun 30, 2026

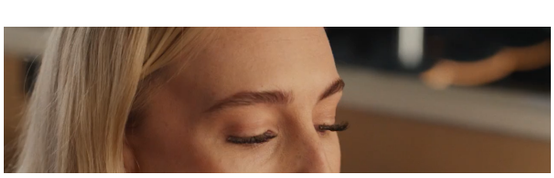
This story originally appeared on Them.

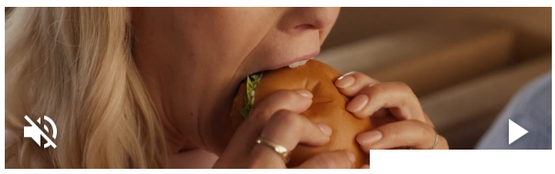
The Daughters of the American Revolution officially rejected a proposed ban on transgender women from joining the organization on June 26.

Stay up to date with the latest in LGBTQ+ news with The Advocate’s email newsletter, in your inbox five days a week.

Enter your email

I’M IN!





Advertisement

ADVERTISEMENT

The long-awaited vote came after years of pressure within the DAR — a nonprofit historical preservation and education society created in 1890, composed of women with direct ancestry to soldiers in the American Revolutionary War — to exclude trans women from the organization's definition of "woman," which would effectively ban them from its ranks.

SUPPORT INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM

LGBTQ+ stories deserve to be *told*.

Your membership powers The Advocate's original reporting—stories that inform, protect, and celebrate our community.

BECOME A MEMBER

FOR AS LITTLE AS $5. CANCEL ANYTIME.

In 2023, the DAR officially amended their guidelines to include language that protects trans members against discrimination in the application process, per *The Washingtonian*.

Advertisement

ADVERTISEMENT

"Some have asked if this means a transgender woman can join DAR or if this means that DAR chapters have previously welcomed transgender women," Pamela Rouse Wright, President of the DAR, wrote in a newsletter on the bylaws. "The answer to both questions is, yes."

"The new language does not change the criteria for membership," DAR spokesperson Bren Landon confirmed to *Newsweek*.

spokesperson [illegible] confirmed to *Newsweek*.

After right-wing media outlets picked up the story with an anti-trans angle, implying there was a policy change that suddenly allowed trans women to join, rather than a clarification of existing bylaws, a group of DAR members began lobbying to ban trans women from the organization. A small percentage of members even left the organization after DAR leadership made it clear that trans members were welcome, per *The Washingtonian*.

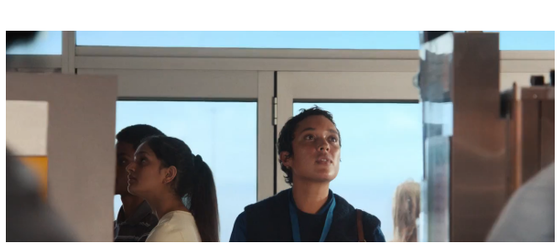
Advertisement

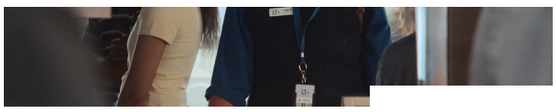
ADVERTISEMENT

The DAR governing body rejected the first official proposal for bylaw amendments that would ban trans women in February 2025, after its Texas chapter put them forward. After national lobbying from a group of members called Daughters Advocating for Restoration, which claims to advocate for "preservation of Historic American Societies for Women," the proposed bylaw amendments that would exclude trans women from the DAR's definition of women were added to matters put to a national member vote.

Laura McDonald, a member of the DAR leading the effort told *IW Features* that the group's goal was to "close the loophole that allows men who self-identify as women to be eligible for membership," deploying a common rhetorical dog whistle used by anti-trans actors to advocate for the expulsion of trans women from public life. As a result of the anti-trans lobbying, Daughters for Inclusivity, a group of DAR members fighting back on the anti-trans effort to push trans women out of the organization, was formed in response. "I cannot fathom that a group formed because of prejudice against women is now doing the same thing to our trans sisters," one member wrote on the group's Facebook page. "The irony is mind blowing to me."

The matter officially came to a head on Friday at the 135th Continental Congress, where members voted 1,481-984 against defining woman as "born female," allowing trans members of the DAR to remain.





Advertisement

ADVERTISEMENT

“The movement against discrimination within the DAR is not about “special treatment” or changing history. It is about treating every applicant and every member with dignity and respect,” another member wrote in the group’s Facebook page. “Transgender Americans are patriots, family members, volunteers, historians, and descendants of Revolutionary War ancestors just like anyone else. Excluding or targeting people because of their gender identity contradicts the values of respect, service, and sisterhood that the DAR claims to uphold.”

Among the allies celebrating the anti-trans effort being struck down in the Daughters for Inclusivity Facebook group, trans DAR members shared their relief and joy.

“I am one of those trans daughters,” Teagan Livingston, a DAR member since 2022, wrote. “The comments I’m reading in this group offer hope. Although I likely don’t know any of you, thank you so very much for being such steadfast allies. In this current political climate, you’ve no idea how very much that means to me and other trans daughters!”